


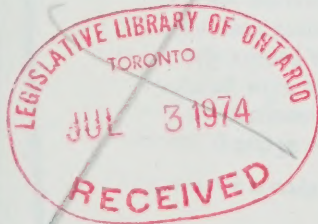
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294. One in six of the children in the National Survey* (Appendix 3, Section 3, paragraph 2) had attended nursery school or nursery class. The highest proportions came from professional and unskilled workers' homes—25 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. Since, according to the N.U.T. Survey², three-quarters of all maintained nursery places are in working class areas, it seems clear that many professional parents are making use of private nurseries. According to the National Survey (Appendix 3, Table 38) there were marked regional variations in the distribution of nursery places. Thirty-four per cent of children in the Metropolitan area had attended nurseries as against eight and nine per cent in East Anglia and West and East Ridings respectively. Provision of day nurseries is equally patchy—of the 11,000 local authority day nursery places in England and Wales in 1964 surveyed in one enquiry, 2,800³ were in Lancashire as were 15 of the 57 factory nurseries. Of a total of 1,585 private nurseries in England and Wales in one survey, 82 were in Orpington. "Nursery schools, as opposed to classes⁴, are surprisingly concentrated in a broad crescent stretching from Greater London through the northern and western Home Counties to Oxford and Birmingham, thence to the Potteries and the textile towns of East Lancashire, across the Pennines to the Bradford area and northwards to County Durham. The highest number of nursery schools in a single authority's area is to be found in Birmingham; London comes next. Outside this 'nursery-school crescent' there are only a few minor concentrations, notably in Bristol, Nottingham, Liverpool and Hull." Three-quarters of nursery places are in classes in infant schools. Surprising variations exist between towns of similar sizes in similar regions.

295. Most, but not all, maintained nursery places are given to children who suffer some kind of social handicap. Some children are admitted because they lack companionship, others because their homes are too crowded or poor in other ways. They may come from flats lacking space, or because housing conditions are poor. Some are admitted on medical grounds or to help mothers nearing the end of their tether. Some mothers are working, although our enquiries show this is not the reason for most admissions. Often there is more than one reason. Teachers' children get priority because this is a condition for the expansion of nursery education under Addendum No. 2 to Circular 8/60. Since a nursery should not be simply a refuge for children in trouble, some children without handicaps get places with the unavoidable result that other children in need have to go without. The fault lies, however, not in the restrictions on expansion rather than the selection of children.

The Case for Nursery Education

296. There is a wide measure of agreement among informed observers that nursery provision on a substantial scale is desirable, not only on educational grounds but also for social, health and welfare considerations. The case, we believe, is a strong one.

297. Only two individual witnesses questioned whether expansion was desirable and that mainly because they thought teachers and buildings were more urgently needed elsewhere. Of the principal local authority and teacher associations all were agreed that it would be desirable, although some local authorities were doubtful whether expansion would be feasible in the present shortage of teachers. Of the 1,852 primary school teachers who

298. A distinction is made in the Survey between independent and maintained nurseries.

answered our Questionnaire (Appendix 1, Table B.2) nearly 73 per cent said that nursery education should be available to all children whose parents wanted it, over 22 per cent said that it should be available only for those in special need and 2.7 per cent said it should not be provided. In the National Survey enquiry into parental attitudes (Appendix 3, Tables 41 and 42) a third of the parents would have preferred their children to have started full-time schooling (including nursery school or class) before the age at which they had in fact started schooling. The 1964 N.U.T. Survey of Nursery Education⁵ showed that, where nursery education is available, the waiting lists are often double the size of the school, though some children may be placed on more than one waiting list. In 1966 in one urban area there were 1,818 children attending nursery schools and classes and 5,410 on the waiting list. In two thirds of nursery schools, the waiting period between application and admission is at least a year and may be considerably more.

298. The Nursery Schools Association told us they wanted more nursery places because most children can benefit from the physical care, the enriched opportunities for play both indoors and out, the companionship of other children and the presence of understanding adults which nursery education provides. Children need opportunities to get to know people outside their own family circle and to form some relationships which are less close and emotionally charged. The earlier maturity of children increases their need for companionship and stimulus before the age of attendance at school.

299. Many young children, of course, have a stable home background, companionship with their parents and their brothers and sisters, and sufficient space indoors and out. But there are aspects of modern life in cities which disturb us. The child who lives with his parents in a tall block of flats is likely to be house bound as the child in a bungalow or small house is not. The "extended family" with cousins and aunts and grandparents close at hand provides, where it still exists, a natural bridge between the intimacy of life at home and life with strangers in the wider world of school. But there are fewer extended families because more men change jobs and move to new districts. Mothers have less relief from their young children, lose the social contacts they have been used to, and may become less good mothers in consequence. And, of course, increasing numbers of married women are at work. The consequence of this is the new occupation of registered or unregistered child minders. Many professional families, too, rely on "au pair" girls or other help to look after their young children during part of the day. Child minders and au pair girls are rarely trained to look after the young child. Their growing number points to the need for the transitional world of the nursery school or class with its trained staff to do for today's children what modern family life often cannot do.

300. Long before a child is five he is already using words and is often familiar with books, toys and music. The issue is not whether he should be "educated" before he reaches school age because that is happening anyway. What has to be decided is whether his education is to take place in increasing association with other children and under the supervision of skilled people, as well as of parents, in the right conditions and with the right equipment.

301. Finally, there is evidence⁶ on the special needs of children from deprived or inadequate home backgrounds. Some homes have positive disadvantages:

children from families in overcrowded or shared houses, or from broken homes, or even children of obsessive mothers may have few opportunities for normal and healthy development. Early help is also needed for handicapped children and for those with physically handicapped parents.

302. Our witnesses were those who had worked with and observed the needs of young children. They quoted research on the extent to which nursery education can compensate for social deprivation and special handicaps. Hindley⁷ shows that even amongst children below compulsory school age, the growth of measured intelligence is associated with socio-economic features. There is strong support among witnesses for the view of Bernstein and Deutsch^{8,9} that poverty of language is a major cause of poor achievement and that attempts to offset poverty of language are best made as early as possible. These researchers argue that thought is dependent on language and that some working class children have insufficient encouragement, example and stimulus in the situations of their daily life to build up a language which is rich and wide ranging in vocabulary, is a tool for categorisation and generalisation, and which, being complex in structure, develops concepts of time, space and contingency. The argument thus leads to the conclusion that since development in communication begins in the earliest years, one way in which the consequences of social deprivation can be overcome is to provide richer experience as soon as children are ready for nursery education. Other research consists mainly of studies of the improvement in mental defectives and in children from orphanages after nursery school experience, as well as of some work on children from more normal backgrounds. Hunt¹⁰ outlines these investigations and, while recognising their importance, indicates the difficulties in evaluating them and the inconclusive argument that has focused on them. Examples of some of the difficulties are to be found in a recent paper by J. W. B. Douglas and J. M. Ross outlining the later effects of nursery school attendance¹¹. The educational performance of children from the nursery schools was higher at eight than that of other children, but this advantage was lost by 11, and at 15 they did slightly less well than their contemporaries. In no year, however, were the differences statistically significant. Maladjustment among children who had attended nurseries was higher than amongst other children but, as is pointed out in the paper, children may have been admitted to nursery schools because of problems of behaviour, and "the conclusion to be drawn depends . . . on the original selection of the children . . . (It) may well be that a group who were highly vulnerable at entry have been given substantial help." The National Child Development Study (Appendix 10) may at a later stage produce further evidence on this issue.

303. The research evidence so far available is both too sparse and too heavily weighted by studies of special groups of children to be decisively in favour of nursery education for all. We rely, therefore, on the overwhelming evidence of experienced educators.

304. Each of the countries we visited provides education for children before the age of compulsory entry to school on a more generous scale than we do. Evidence from foreign countries must, however, be used cautiously to support or reject arguments for nursery education, first, because the age of compulsory entry is one or two years later than ours and, secondly, because the purposes and methods of education of children between three and seven are often different from ours. Yet the fact remains that many of these countries

believe that educational stimulus for young children is of great importance, particularly for the deprived. In the U.S.A. at the present time federal and other authorities, and private foundations, are providing large sums of money for programmes of nursery education, to counter the effects of extreme deprivation.

Mothers at Work: The Economic Argument

305. A further argument in favour of nurseries touches on equally complex and controversial subjects. The British economy and society are likely to change greatly in the next decades with results for child care which cannot be ignored. Mothers are demanding more and better quality services in schools, and more medical and social services generally. Many more married women now go to work and more will. The proportion of married women in employment in Great Britain, when corrected for changes in age composition, doubled between 1931 and 1951. The National Institute of Economic and Social Research has made projections of married women's employment to 1975 which show a further substantial rise since 1960 and predict that it will continue¹². Many of these working wives, of course, have not got children below school age; but many have and it seems that their number will grow. Different studies^{13, 14, 15, 16} show that the numbers of women who work range between 12 per cent and 35 per cent of those with a child under five, while as many as 13 per cent have had a full-time job at some time since they have had children. Further information may be available from later reports of the National Child Development Study (1958 Cohort). In our own small supplementary sample of 249 children entering school in the summer of 1965, 21 per cent of mothers were working (Appendix 6, paragraph 31). The general pressure to raise living standards causes mothers to go to work to raise money and employers to search for additional labour of which the most obvious source is married women. Although economic reasons are the most important in sending married women back to work, it is also true that many anyhow prefer to work, often with their husband's approval, because running a home now offers insufficient employment for them. Such research as we have been able to examine does not prove that children with mothers at work are necessarily worse off. Prolonged and early separation from mothers is known to be disadvantageous, but a short absence during the day does not harm the child who is ready for it. There was no evidence from the National Survey that mothers who were working had less time than others for their children in the evening. Many middle class parents pay someone to look after their children and send them, if possible, to nursery schools—as is evident from the data quoted in paragraph 294. In quoting this research we are not saying that it is better or unharmed for mothers with children under five to work. Our conclusions are that many mothers will work, and that their children will, as a result, need places in nurseries. And since, in the absence of positive steps to stop it, the numbers of mothers working will increase, it is possible to offset the contribution made by married women workers against the costs of providing nurseries. We assess these indirect benefits in Annex B to Chapter 31.

Arguments against Nursery Education

306. The first argument advanced against nursery education is that the place for the young child is with his mother in the home—a view expressed in the

1933 Report¹⁷—and that, in many homes, children have the experiences that the nursery school or class provides. Where this happens, nursery education is an unnecessary elaboration of these experiences and cannot give as generous a measure of adult support as the good home.

307. Some of those who have studied in detail the mother-child relationship in the early years^{18, 19, 20, 21} hold that harm may come to some children through removal from their mother's care and companionship at too early an age before they realise that separation is only temporary. They stress the need for the greatest care in the gradual process of separating the child from his mother. They argue that a child's sense of security depends on the presence of a familiar figure. In the first three years of life only those whom a child sees regularly can give him a sense of security, particularly when he is in an unfamiliar situation or confronted by strange adults or children or by unaccustomed events. If anxiety is aroused it tends to be cumulative and, so far from promoting healthy independence, such experiences might make the child either too clinging or too detached and unable to form relationships. Evidence of this kind points to the danger of allowing children to attend nursery school or class at too early an age or for too long a period each day.

308. Another argument against an expansion of nursery education is based on the shortage of teachers. This might indeed suggest that there should be a contraction in order to divert teachers to pupils of compulsory school age. Inevitably, more nursery education will cost money and make heavy demands on manpower and will compete with the needs of other sectors of the economy and social services which, like the hospitals, require large numbers of girls with similar educational qualifications (see Chapter 31).

II. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS: FUTURE PATTERNS OF NURSERY EDUCATION

309. The arguments in paragraphs 306 to 308 have an important bearing on the conditions in which nursery education should be provided, but do not disprove the case for it. We conclude that there should be a large expansion of nursery education subject to the following points:

- (a) It should be part-time rather than whole time because young children should not be separated for long from their mothers. Attendance need not be for a whole half-day session and in the earlier stages only one, two or three days a week will often be desirable. In the words of Susan Isaacs "the nursery school is not a substitute for a good home: its prime function . . . is to supplement the normal services which the home renders to its children and to make a link between the natural and indispensable fostering of the child in the home and social life of the world at large . . ."²²
- (b) A minority of children will, however, need full-time nursery education for a variety of reasons.
- (c) The expansion of nursery education, which these recommendations involve, ought not to be at the expense of existing standards in the primary schools.

310. The major obstacle to expansion has been the shortage of teachers. The scheme we now outline seems to us to offer a way round this and other difficulties.

311. Our recommendations are, in summary, that expanded nursery education should be available for children from three to five in "nursery groups"

of 20 places.* Two or three groups might make one unit—to be called a “nursery centre”; or they might be combined with day nurseries or clinics in “children’s centres”. We believe that groups should always be under the ultimate supervision of a qualified teacher, but that the main day to day work should be undertaken by two year trained nursery assistants, of whom there should be a minimum of one to every ten children.

312. Where a group is supervised by a member of a primary school staff, the group will be formally part of that school. Groups not attached to a school but sharing the supervision of a qualified teacher might form a single nursery group even though they might be in two or three separate buildings.

Nursery Groups and Day Nurseries: A Unified Service

313. We have not so far distinguished between a nursery school or class, which is part of the education service, and a day nursery, which comes under the Ministry of Health. Day nurseries have made, and are making, a contribution towards the intellectual and emotional, as well as the physical, well being of children from the age of six months until they enter school. Their purpose is now mainly to relieve family problems. Reasons for admission include the difficulties of widowed or unmarried mothers, poverty severe enough to oblige the mother to work and unsatisfactory physical conditions at home. The day nurseries are concerned primarily with physical health, and are designed for children whose mothers are unable to care for them. They make their greatest contribution at the lower end of the age range. At present they take babies from six months or even from shortly after birth until entry to school. At the upper end, nursery education, properly so called, should be of increasing importance. An educational emphasis does not mean a lessening of concern for the physical health of the child. But help for older children calls for supervision by those whose training has given them broad educational perspectives and skills. In some areas day nurseries and nursery schools have good co-operative arrangements through the help of a joint committee which shares the expert knowledge of officials from both the health and education departments. This we welcome.

314. Although there is no obvious break in children’s development in the years below school age we think that, since lines must be drawn somewhere, the day nursery is the proper place for those children who have to be away from their homes before the age of three. An institution with a more directly educational aim is right for children of three and over and for this reason it should be provided by the local education authority under the Education Acts instead of being administered by the health authorities. This argument is strengthened if our proposals for changes in the dates of entry to compulsory schooling for some children are accepted (see Chapter 10). Children in long term care might also attend the nursery groups, provided that the special strains to which the children are subject are taken into account before they are assumed to be ready for nursery education.

315. If the nursery provision for children aged three and over is to be in nursery groups administered under the Education Acts, the character of the day nurseries will change. Furthermore, day nurseries provide care through-

*When there is more than one nursery group, children and the assistants responsible for them will work co-operatively.

out normal adult working hours and in the holiday periods for children with difficult home circumstances. Only a few nursery schools care for children beyond normal nursery hours. These problems can be overcome if the larger nursery centres, and particularly those that form part of the children's centres containing day nurseries as well, make arrangements for children who must stay all day. At present the number of children involved is small: the average daily attendance at day nurseries of children under five was 16,470 in 1965—although the majority attend beyond normal school hours.

The Age Range of Nursery Education

316. The evidence suggests that most children are too young at two to tolerate separation from their mothers (see paragraphs 306 and 307 above). Some will be ready at three, but for others four will be a better age to join a nursery group. It will be for parents to decide and most parents will exercise this right sensibly. Nursery education should be available to children at any time after the beginning of the school year after they reach the age of three.

Part-Time Nursery Education

317. Since it is harmful to remove a child too suddenly or for too long from his mother, part-time attendance should be the normal pattern of nursery education. Children should be introduced gradually even to part-time education. It is the practice in many nurseries for the mother to stay with her child when he first enters and this should be encouraged. Teachers and parents should take account of the differing needs of young children in deciding at what age and, to begin with, for what periods each week and for how long each session, they should attend a nursery group. The minority of children who will attend full-time will have an even greater need for gradual introduction.

The Encouragement of Attendance

318. Evidence from such bodies as the Save the Children Fund and the Family Service Units shows that while many parents of children from impoverished home backgrounds respond to the advice of health visitors and others, a minority are unwilling or unable to make the effort even to take their children to a clinic, let alone a nursery. There is no easy solution. Compulsory attendance at a nursery group would be unworkable, even for those with special needs, for enforcement would place an intolerable burden on both the local authorities and on nursery staffs, and would create a relationship with the parents contrary to the whole concept of nursery education. A more widespread provision of nursery groups will help in reducing the distance mothers have to travel. In exceptional cases local education authorities or voluntary bodies might arrange for children to be brought to the nursery groups or taken home again.

319. We hope that these parents will appreciate the nursery groups and that as the health, social work and education services become better co-ordinated there will be more and better contact between them. In any event local education authorities can make full use of the advice of health visitors and others from whose records information about children in need can be gained. As nursery education becomes more generally available health visitors may

find it easier to persuade families to make more use of it. How far the nursery places are used by children in special need should be carefully studied by local authorities and by the Department of Education and Science so that further methods of persuasion can be brought into play if this proves necessary. More positively, the problem must be tackled by the development of parental education, including that of parents of children of pre-school age, which we suggest in Chapter 4.

Nursery Education and Parents

320. Nursery education creates contacts between parents, the educational service and the related health and welfare services, and can thereby improve the quality of the whole educational process. As the Hadow Report of 1933 pointed out, nursery education brings parents and teachers together in a setting where good attitudes towards community problems can flourish and where advice on all aspects of child rearing can be easily sought. At that time as many as 40 per cent entered school at five in need of medical attention. Even now, while three-quarters of mothers attend child welfare clinics during the first year of their child's life, only a quarter persist between one and five. Nursery education should throughout be an affair of co-operation between the nursery and home and it will only succeed to the full if it carries the parents into partnership. Support does not mean mild consent; it means the kind of active concern which can only come out of joint activity and out of close knowledge by the parents of what the schools are doing and why. The nursery group needs to be an outpost of adult education if it is to attain its goal for young children.

321. In Chapter 4 ways of enabling parents to participate in the life of the school have been described. Their active help can more easily be used in nursery groups. Some mothers may train as nursery assistants and work in the nurseries. Others may be content to help in less skilled ways. In some instances in this country, mothers are already being drawn into the life of the nursery. The head of one nursery school in which parents are encouraged to help wrote: "It increases their sense of belonging and gives their children tremendous joy." The child sees teacher and mother working together and accepting the same standards of behaviour. We saw this being done in one area of California with outstanding success. In some kindergartens visited it was a condition of children's admission that mothers should help and be present at discussions. We should not wish to go as far as this, as it might exclude some children who should be admitted.

322. Parental involvement with the nursery is bound to be close if only because at this stage mothers must bring their children to it. If parents become used to talking to teachers, more may continue to be interested in the work of the schools as their children get older. Contact with parents will be an important duty of the qualified teacher who is in control of the nursery group.

The Future of Voluntary Nursery Groups

323. Many voluntary nursery groups have done valuable work with little financial or other encouragement, and their contribution deserves to be widely recognised. They draw upon parental enthusiasm and effort of a kind that we

hope parents will put into the maintained nursery groups. There are about 600 groups established by the Pre-School Playgroups Association which are run on a part-time basis in such accommodation as is available, staffed mostly by mothers who are not qualified teachers and with active participation from other parents. Although guidance and help are available from the Association's headquarters the groups mainly exist where parents have the initiative and ability to set them up and to run them. Costs are met by daily charges for attendance. The Department of Education and Science have recently made a small grant towards the Association's headquarter expenses. Groups run by the Save the Children Fund also provide part-time places and are in the charge of nursery assistants, supervised by qualified teachers. In meeting requests for groups to be established, the Save the Children Fund gives priority to areas of social need. Costs are met largely from the funds of the Society, although in some areas grants have been made by local authorities. We understand that the Pre-School Playgroups Association wish to continue and extend their activities and the Save the Children Fund wish to continue to provide groups in especially difficult situations where experimental methods are needed, at least until maintained groups are generally available.

324. Nursery groups should be provided, in the long run, by local education authorities. Until enough maintained places are available, however, local education authorities should be given power and should be encouraged to give financial and other assistance to non profit making associations which, in their opinion, fill a need they cannot meet. This should include some arrangement for the training of their staff to be approved by the endorsing body which we suggest should be responsible for the training of nursery assistants.

325. At present, the premises of voluntary groups are inspected by the local health authorities. Where they continue to exist, with or without help from public funds, and the majority of children attending are between three and five years, we recommend that inspection of them by local education authorities and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools should be similar to that of the maintained nurseries.

Siting of Nurseries

326. Ideally, all services, including nursery, for the care of young children should be grouped together and placed near the children's homes and the primary schools. However, the nursery groups will have to be placed at first where they will fit most easily, and that will often be in existing primary schools. Elsewhere, they might be on the same site as children's clinics. It is intended to build 500,000 new houses a year and in the re-building of an area it should be possible to build nurseries near a health centre, a group practice of doctors or other community facilities. Since industry would benefit from an expansion of nursery education because labour will be easier to recruit (see Annex B to Chapter 31) factories might provide premises for a group which can then be maintained by the local education authority. In new housing development, particularly in blocks of high flats which increasingly are being built in the cities, space should be left for nursery education. The planning of accommodation for nursery groups should become as much a commonplace in the development of new areas as that of other community facilities, although we hope that their siting will be undertaken with more sensitivity to users' needs than is common at present. Nursery groups will

need to be in addition to the play centres and "one o'clock clubs" which cater all the year round for children and their mothers and which are part of the amenities of a district. The needs of young children for spaces where they can play safely with other children and yet be near enough to be in constant contact with an adult have been too often forgotten in post-war urban development. The planners have accepted, in recent years, that a family must have a space for a car, but few have considered the needs of pre-school children.

III. THE EXPANSION OF NURSERY EDUCATION: THE PLACES NEEDED, THEIR STAFFING AND ACCOMMODATION

327. We turn now to the problems of supply, staff, buildings and money that arise from our proposals that nursery education should be expanded. The ideal pattern that all nursery teachers would like to see established, if there were no shortages of teachers and buildings, would be one in which groups of 20 children would be assigned to the care of one trained teacher and one assistant with N.N.E.B. or other recognised training. But it will not be possible for some decades to find the 30-40,000 teachers for nursery education that this pattern would demand and we therefore propose a somewhat different pattern that will allow nursery education to develop, even if under conditions which are not ideal.

The Number of Places Needed

328. Eventually there should be nursery places for all children whose parents wish them to attend from the beginning of the school year after the age of three.* Since attendance will be voluntary it is not easy to estimate the number of places that will be needed. We have based our estimates of demand on the following assumptions:—

- (a) nursery education will be available either for a morning or an afternoon session for five days a week except that over the country as a whole provision will be made for 15 per cent of children to attend both a morning and an afternoon session (see paragraphs 329 and 330 below). We should, however, expect some of the younger children to attend fewer than five sessions a week and less than a full session and that some will enter nursery groups at different times throughout the year;
- (b) the average annual age group in England will be 880,000 children in the mid 1970s and over 900,000 by 1980†;
- (c) not more than half the three year old children will attend nursery groups, either full or part-time, because many parents will consider their children too young to attend until they have reached the age of four;
- (d) a maximum of 90 per cent of four year old children may attend nurseries. Some parents will be unwilling to allow them to attend nursery groups,

*In this Chapter we refer to 'three year olds' and 'four year olds'. In fact, their ages will range at the beginning of the school year from 3-0 to 3-11 and 4-0 to 4-11 respectively. Some three years olds will therefore reach four early in the school year.

†These figures are based on current population projections. If, however, the most recent trends in births continue, some downward movement is likely.

NOTE OF RESERVATION ON NURSERY EDUCATION (CHAPTER 9)

BY MRS. M. BANNISTER

1. Instead of a nation-wide extension of nursery education as proposed by the Council, I suggest that all efforts should be made to provide play centres and encourage play groups, except in "educational priority areas" where nursery schools are justified. These play centres should be open all day and all year and should cater for a much wider age range. Mothers should play a full part in helping to run them on a pattern similar to the 600 already in successful existence.
2. If harm comes to a child it is too late to rescue him at three. Play centres and groups where much younger children could be brought together would go some way towards mitigating such ill effects so that they could all enjoy a rich play life. I would hope that these groups might have the help eventually of a peripatetic and highly trained teacher so that the mothers could benefit from her expertise and the children come earlier under her benevolent eye.
3. Nursery education as proposed by the Council tends to disrupt the mother, child and sibling relationship.
4. It is unlikely that the scheme as proposed would produce a stable staff of real quality. An earlier and higher marriage rate will lead to a reduction in the number of experienced single women who at the moment make such a valuable contribution and help to form a stable framework.
5. The nursery assistants will be drawn from the same source as the nursing profession, which is already gravely understaffed, and cannot afford the loss of any potential nurses. Nor does it seem wise to divert any teachers from the primary schools to effect nursery education.
6. The expansion of nursery education will make for an increase in working mothers and it will be difficult for the mothers to care for their children in the holidays unless special arrangements are made by industry and the professional bodies. Any such arrangement must introduce another element of instability.
7. I am convinced by the evidence concerning the harm that may come to pre-school children of working mothers. Therefore the present increase in working mothers seems to me undesirable on educational grounds and, except where economic necessities are paramount, it should be discouraged.
8. The scheme as proposed by the Council does little to enable mothers to participate actively in the early school experiences of their children. The mothers' loneliness and boredom are also major social problems which play centres and groups might help to solve.
9. Even if fees were charged they would cover only a small fraction of the real cost.
10. It is an open question whether the money which it is proposed to spend on nursery education in "educational priority areas" might not be better spent on housing. Since all our evidence suggests the quality of the home has the decisive influence on the child's educational future, the money might be better spent on improved housing and means directed towards improving maternal care.

NOTE OF RESERVATION ON THE ORGANISATION OF SERVICES FOR UNDER FIVES
(CHAPTER 9) BY PROFESSOR D. V. DONNISON, SIR JOHN NEWSOM AND
DR. M. YOUNG.

Day nurseries should be as much within the educational service as nursery schools, and responsible to education authorities. The problems that will arise through confining the under threes to day nurseries and providing all day nursery schools for the over threes will be formidable enough anyway, but less so if the responsibility for the reorganisation rests with one authority rather than two. Any joint authority is liable to have more joint than authority about it. Moreover, the trend of modern thinking is to emphasise the educational needs rather than the purely physical health of children, including the under threes; and in accordance with this trend it would be appropriate for nurseries, whatever the age of their children, to be part of the educational rather than of the health service.

NOTE OF RESERVATION ON PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE COSTS OF NURSERY
EDUCATION (CHAPTER 9). BY PROFESSOR A. J. AYER, DR. I. C. R. BYATT,
PROFESSOR D. V. DONNISON, MR. E. W. HAWKINS, LADY PLOWDEN, MR. T. H. F.
RAISON, BRIGADIER L. L. THWAYTES AND DR. M. YOUNG.

1. Chapter 9 notes that the Hadow Report recommended nursery schools in 1933 and that the Education Act of 1944 gave them the blessing of Parliament; yet it does not draw what seems to us the obvious lesson. Why has nothing effective been done? Quite simply, there have not been enough resources, in teachers or buildings. If that is true of the past it certainly remains true of the present. Resources are relatively as scarce as ever. The prospects of nurseries are not therefore that much better than they were in 1944, and will not become so without the crucial further proposal we make here. Extra resources are needed, and (apart perhaps from some voluntary and private nurseries which will charge anyway) will not be forthcoming on a large scale unless the amount of money being spent on education is substantially increased. The necessity for this is shown in Chapter 31. The answer we suggest is a parental contribution. If nurseries were the Council's over-riding priority the situation would perhaps be different. They are not.

2. Our suggestion is advanced as much in the interests of children whose parents cannot afford to pay as it is of others. Without a parental contribution we fear that nursery education will not be extended at all and such children be no better off than they are today. With it, we can be more optimistic, and, if the hopes are realised, there will be nursery schools which can be attended by the children of poorer parents, in and out of educational priority areas. They are often just the ones who could benefit most. Charging the richer will be a means of helping the poorer. Charging those with smaller families will be a means of helping those with larger.

3. What other sources of finance are there? We cannot be confident that, of the public money available for social services, less should necessarily be spent on housing or old age pensions so that more could be spent on nursery schools. Rates and taxes cannot be raised expressly for the purpose. We

recognise that in public services benefits and contribution to cost cannot, and should not, be precisely equated. Public services exist where one cannot, and should not, try to. But the resistance of people to pay higher taxes is still an important consideration. Pensioners and others would scarcely welcome such an impost just for the purpose of financing nurseries. This is all the more so because a few of the mothers who will send their children to nursery schools will be able in consequence to go out to work part-time and add to the income of themselves and their families, and a great deal could be made of those few by the opponents of nursery schools.

Facing up to affluence

4. To the majority of the Council a principle that should be sacrosanct appears to be at stake. Maintained schools have always been free, and therefore should always remain so. But the principle crystallised at a time when incomes were a good deal lower. Parents are now more affluent; they are more interested in education. Today they are for the most part able and willing to contribute, and their willingness to do so could be used as a lever for getting a more general service. Particular proposals for educational improvement should surely be considered to see if on their merits it would be right or not to ask parents to contribute.

5. If this be the approach, contributions for nursery schools recommend themselves. Where the community makes education compulsory it is in general right that the community at large should pay. But this is not proposed for nursery education. It is not to be compulsory. Not to charge would therefore be to create injustice as between parents who do not choose to make use of nursery schools and those who do. The parents who do not would be paying, through their rates or taxes, for a service to other parents, sometimes wealthier parents, who take advantage of the new schools. Nor is nursery education to be universal for many years. It will develop in some districts more rapidly than in others. Not to charge would be to create further injustice between people in one district, who do not yet have nursery schools but have to pay for them through taxes, and people in other districts who do have them. In these two ways nursery schools will be different from most other maintained schools, and, if they differ, so should their finance.

6. Another argument is that payment—up to 13s. 6d a day—is already made for children attending day nurseries, and for much private baby-minding as well. Day nurseries constitute a precedent on which we lean. The majority do not suggest that charges for day nurseries should cease. The consequence would be that parents would pay for children up to three but at this age, though the service would be much the same, charges would be dropped. To act as we propose on this and to bring nursery schools into line with day nurseries would be more sensible, and should lead to more of the children who are at present privately minded for a charge being given an educational experience in a nursery school. It is also worth noting that in nearly all other countries visited by members of the C.A.C., including Denmark, France, Poland, Sweden and the U.S.S.R., there were charges for nurseries. We cannot see that Britain should on this stand apart.

Remission of fees

7. We are naturally in favour of remissions of charges for those who cannot afford to pay. For our main purpose in proposing charges at all for those who

can afford them is, as we have said, to secure nursery schools which would not otherwise be there at all for those who cannot. The suggestion is that the standard charge should be the 5s. per half day which is reckoned as the full cost (see Table 41), but if some l.e.a.'s could get the cost down to less the charges would also be less. Such a sum would clearly be beyond the means of families with low incomes or several children, and these should get free places. The larger the number of children, the higher the level of income that should qualify a family for remission. We further recommend that as soon as charges and remissions are introduced (even experimentally) steps should be taken by means of research to find out whether children who should be in nursery schools are not there because their parents are being deterred by the charges. The system for remission should be revised if necessary in the light of the results of the research. Whatever happens, all nursery schools in educational priority areas should be free to begin with in order to make sure that the children who need them most are not kept out. We propose that fees should be introduced as soon as possible in some other areas so that the size of demand (given charges and remissions) could be estimated as a basis for general national planning.

8. Nursery education needs definition. We do not think it would be right to charge fees for schools given the label of nursery, and not to children of the same age in schools called infant. Age should be the criterion, not type of school. We recommend that fees should therefore be charged for all children under five, irrespective of which sort of school they are in. It also follows that children of over five in nursery schools, who will be plentiful once the single date of entry is introduced, should not be charged.

9. If resources were more plentiful we would not favour charges. This is particularly because some parents who cannot afford to pay may be too proud to accept remission and therefore keep their children away. But new traditions can be created. Few parents are now too proud to accept State support for the education of their children in universities. If in universities, why not in nursery schools?

NOTE OF RESERVATION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SECTION A OF CHAPTER 17),
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MRS. E. V. SMITH, PROFESSOR J. M. TANNER AND DR. M. YOUNG

1. The Teaching of Theology

1. We share the view of our colleagues that the present state of religious education in primary schools is not satisfactory, but do not think that their proposals go far enough in the way of reform. In our view the root of the trouble is that religious education, if it is taken at all seriously, is bound to involve theology; and theology is both too recondite and too controversial a subject to be suitable for inclusion in the curriculum of primary schools. It cannot be properly adapted either to the understanding of children of this age or to the methods by which we are proposing that they should be taught.

